

consciously determined behaviour of normal and abnormal children. Psycho-analysis provides the only theory which begins to explain the fantastic unreason of much childish behaviour, but to get a balanced picture one also needs to know how the child's intelligence works, and the kinds of things he does as he goes about his daily business.

The technique of research in child study is a very difficult one; in fact there are now many techniques, each with its own pitfalls. The more important ones, and the kind of yield they are producing, are briefly described in the introduction. The main part of the book is concerned with the answers so far provided by investigation to certain fundamental problems of child psychology. The first of these is the division of the years of childhood into phases of development, and the ascertainment of norms of achievement in intellectual ability and emotional adaptation. Many studies in this field have been made during the last few years, and much valuable knowledge has been gained. Another question we are beginning to be able to answer is the relation between psychological maturation and training in the production of skills.

Dr. Isaacs has selected the first year of babyhood for special attention because psychological life is then most difficult of access to the observer; and it is only very recently that psycho-analysis has provided a key to it. Social and emotional development after infancy, and intellectual growth, with problems of perception, language, imagination and reasoning, and the results of intelligence tests, complete this part of the survey. It is followed by a short but very clear and adequate exposition of the fundamental mechanisms by which the growing child, for better or worse, deals with its psychic difficulties. The final chapter considers the educational bearings of what has gone before.

One of the most valuable features of the book is its insistence throughout on the genetic approach, by which all of the child's powers and problems are seen to grow out of its earlier history. The book is intended for students of psychology, parents and

teachers. Its great compression may make it rather difficult for those without some background of psychological reading, but there is a good short bibliography, and as Dr. Isaacs has performed the difficult feat of keeping the fascination of the subject alive in a summarized statement, we may feel confident that the bibliography will be used.

EVELYN LAWRENCE.

SEX

Ellison, John, Goodwin, Aubrey, Read, Charles D., and Rivett, L. Carnac. *Sex Ethics: The Principles and Practice of Contraception, Abortion and Sterilization.* London, 1934. Baillière, Tindall & Cox. Pp. xi + 281. Price 12s. 6d.

Stone, Drs. Hannah and Abraham. *A Marriage Manual.* New York, 1935. Simon & Schuster. Pp. xi + 334. Price \$2.50.

Walker, Kenneth, M.A., F.R.C.S. *Sex and a Changing Civilization.* London, 1935. John Lane: The Bodley Head. Pp. ix + 135. Price 3s. 6d.

Hirschfeld, Dr. Magnus. *Sex in Human Relationships.* London, 1935. John Lane: The Bodley Head. Pp. xxii + 218. Price 8s. 6d.

Charles, Edward. *The Sexual Impulse.* London, 1935. Boriswood. Pp. xiii + 306. Price 21s.

ONCE again one turns the pages of the sex books that have been sent for review, and still they seem as like as a row of rusty pins. One asks for the hundredth time what justification can be offered for their production. In face of all the books on sex, the books that tell us things that either we know already or cannot learn from books, the books that purport to describe our sexual peculiarities but instead reveal those of their authors, the books that offer to initiate our children into that very limited range of facts which alone have been dignified with the name

"facts of life" but fob them off with a tedious story about pistils and stamens; in face of the thousands—it seems at least thousands but it may be only hundreds—of books already published on this or that aspect of the subject, is there, one asks, any reason, apart from the natural prejudice in both authors and publishers to conform with the law of supply and demand, for issuing any more?

As one who believes in the utmost freedom of publication, I should be among the first to deplore any attempt to stem this flood. Indeed, the fact that I happen not to like a book has never seemed to me a sufficient reason for opposing its publication. But I wonder if we should not perhaps all be better off if there were an embargo—preferably in the form of a self-denying ordinance—on the publication of sex books for, say, ten years. By that time there might even be one or two new facts worth recording; certainly by that time much that writers to-day state as established general truths would be recognized as excerpts from their not very important autobiographies.

What then are the principles that have determined the selection of these from among the many apparently similar books competing for attention? The fact that they have not been taken at random proves that the first impression of uniformity is after all not confirmed. It is held that, after living in our midst for some years, the more discerning Chinese learn to distinguish between one European and another. So, after close examination, one finds that some of these books have qualities, good or bad, that differentiate them from the mass. A few even have some originality, usually in form but one or two actually in substance, which establishes their claim to special notice. Occasionally a book demands to be reviewed because it makes such a claim, but does not establish it.

Sex Ethics is in the last category. The authors, all of whom are teachers of gynaecology and obstetrics in London, "feel that the time is long overdue for the issue of an authoritative medical statement on the three great problems of contraception, abortion

and sterilization, for the guidance and consideration of the medical profession"; they are however mistaken in their view that in this book they have written it. From the impressive list—printed on the title page—of their appointments in teaching and other hospitals, it must be assumed that the authors are busy men; for all that we would seriously urge them to spare a little time for reading a selection from the books on contraception and sterilization that have been commended in these columns. They would thus get some inkling of how much they have missed, and of how much avoidable error they have been guilty of, through having failed to familiarize themselves with the literature on these subjects that has been produced by experts.

A word must be added about the size of this book. It looks enormous, and so, measured in bulk of paper, it is. But, of its 281 pages, 50 are either blank or taken up by "plates" of which many are superfluous (Plate 1 must be seen to be believed), and the rest could have been printed in less than half the space. As for the typography, it must surely be a boon to the short-sighted. The work is set in 12 point Old Style, thick-leaded (3 points), and in narrow measure on a large page. The paper is very thick. This is of course one recipe for producing what are known as "weighty tomes"; but there are others which commend themselves better.

It is a matter for some regret that, when a good book is produced, it does not automatically, by the operation of a law of progressive elimination, supersede all its inferior predecessors in the same field; for the appearance of such a work as *A Marriage Manual* could then immediately relieve the existing congestion among works designed to guide the general reader through the everyday problems of sex and marriage.

The form of this book is unusual and highly effective. It is, to quote the authors' introduction,

"written in the form of hypothetical consultations between a physician and a young couple about to be married. In reality it does represent a composite record of many thousands of pre- and post-marital consultations—at the Marriage

Consultation Centers of the Labor Temple and the Community Church, at the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau of New York, and elsewhere. We have adopted the dialogue style because we felt that it lent itself more readily to a vivid presentation of the questions and discussions, and because it appeared to be most suitable for a graphic portrayal of the subject matter."

In the course of this colloquy, the fortunate couple acquires much valuable information about fitness for marriage, sexual anatomy and physiology, the mechanism and problems of reproduction, the prevention of conception, the "art" of marriage, sexual disharmonies, and the hygiene of sexual relationships. The exposition is lucid, interesting and precise, and the authors achieve the difficult feat of combining extreme simplicity with scientific accuracy. Eugenics is discussed with sympathy and understanding, but to the admirable bibliography we would suggest the addition of *Voluntary Sterilization* by C. P. Blacker. It need hardly be added that the chapter on contraception, which is based on Dr. Hannah Stone's experience as Medical Director of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau, New York, is wholly admirable. *A Marriage Manual* is the product of two highly civilized minds, and can be recommended without reservation to the public for which it is intended.

In an introduction to *Sex and the Changing Civilization*, Mr. Kenneth Walker expresses his special indebtedness to two writers, Havelock Ellis and P. D. Ouspensky; that is to say, he is both a scientist, with strong prejudices in favour of scholarship and verifiable facts, and a mystic with leanings to esoteric interpretations of human experience. It is possible that upon receptive minds the summaries of Ouspensky's views included in this book may have an influence as profound as that which reading Ouspensky's *A New Model of the Universe* had on Mr. Walker. He says that it marked a veritable epoch in his way of thinking. It is presumptuous in a reviewer to state dogmatically that his impressions would necessarily be shared by others, so I must speak entirely for myself in affirming that, where they are not merely mumbo-jumbo,

Ouspensky's views, as stated in this book, seem to me platitudinous reconstructions of what other writers have said before and better. The explanation may lie in the fact that his philosophy does not lend itself well to summarization; or it may be that I am singularly obtuse to mystical ways of thought (which I suspect is true).

Taken as a whole the book is well written and thought-provoking. It is informative too, but only incidentally to the author's purpose of discussing the marked change that has taken place in the twentieth century in "the attitude of both men and women to sex and all that pertains to it." To this end he analyses, with wisdom and tolerance, the nature of the sexual impulse, the institution of marriage, extra-marital relations, sex before marriage and sex and the unmarried. It is characteristic of his objectivity that in treating of "sex and its abnormalities" he prefers Havelock Ellis's term "deviation" to the more ancient word "perversion."

"In his opinion the Latin word *perversus* implies a moral judgment and dates from days when sex matters were outside the province of science and all sexual anomalies were condemned as deliberate sin. With the arrival of psychology and the examination of sexual abnormalities from a different angle, new light has been thrown on them so that they can no longer be regarded as being the result of deliberate choice. Consequently the retention of a word belonging to a different epoch of human knowledge and a word that implies guilt, would be a mistake. The word 'deviation' has the additional advantage of being descriptive in that it pictures the sexual impulse as having been deflected from its normal direction."

One quite irrelevant point. On page 16 Mr. Walker writes: "'There is only one psychology and Freud is its prophet' is the muezzin that is cried from the housetops, and the cry brings hope and comfort to a vast crowd of believers." Does the word muezzin, which the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines as the "Mohammedan crier who proclaims hours of prayer from minaret" also mean the thing that is cried? And is it anywhere the practice for the muezzin to cry from the housetops?

Sex in Human Relationships is the first of

Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld's works to be translated into English. That is a pity, for Hirschfeld was a great authority on sexual behaviour, and this is far from being a great book. It surveys a very wide field (sexual selection, harmonious marriages, love between similars and dissimilars, the statistics of sex attraction, fetishism, anti-fetishism, sex symbolism, the psycho-sexual nature of the child, repression and sublimation of the sexual instinct, psycho-glandular parallelism, dancing and sex, and many other matters that come within the scope of the title); but the text is overloaded with speculations and insufficiently fortified with supporting facts. What is one to make of the following? "We may assume that at the moment the sex-centre is subjected to a sexual stimulus, the nervous excitation, by some catalytic process, brings about changes in the accumulated chemical substances which in their turn provoke effects similar to intoxication. In this way we may arrive at some general idea of what voluptuous excitement may be: it is a state of natural intoxication." Or of this? "One cannot help wondering whether the sex orgasm may not similarly be due to a state of intoxication of the brain, brought about by chemical substances; an intoxication proportionate to the intensity of the stimulus, which, in cases of abstinence, may lead to results identical with those caused by abstinence from drugs." Or of this perfect gem? "Observations made by numerous doctors, who attribute the majority of cardiac disturbances to sex deprivation may be interpreted as follows: due to the non-functioning of the centrifugal reflexes and the discharge mechanism, the sex-excitation products, which are present in the blood, cause the vasoconstrictor vessels to contract, and thus bring about a condition of angina pectoris"! The exclamation mark is our own.

Nevertheless the book deserves to be read. Even at their worst Hirschfeld's writings embody the experience of a lifetime devoted to the scientific study of sexual phenomena. The translation is by Mr. John Rodker, who is a distinguished man of letters; but this is not one of his best achievements.

As these words are written, *The Sexual Impulse* by Mr. Edward Charles is the subject of a prosecution under the Obscenity Acts. It is more important then to state my opinion that it is a decent book than to make a formal review of its contents. Mr. Charles's views do not, it happens, agree with mine, and I am among those who prefer the consulting room to the printed page for imparting certain kinds of instruction. But what have my or anybody's prejudices to do with freedom of publication? I will not criticize this work because I believe that the liberty to express opinions that do not accord with Mr. Charles's is worthless if the right to proclaim his own opinions is denied to Mr. Charles. His book enjoys the distinction of forewords by Professor Julian Huxley and Mrs. Janet Chance; but somewhere there was a policeman who did not hold with it.

The scope and spirit of *The Sexual Impulse* can perhaps best be conveyed by quoting the author's own summary of its contents:

"I have divided this book into three parts.

"In Part I, I have considered the individual as an animal in a bi-sexual system of life, i.e. an individual inheriting biological impulses, elaborating cultural instincts, having a mind withal, and often getting into trouble, largely, no doubt, because of that mind.

"In Part II, I have tried to examine the social and cultural environment of man for the last thirty or forty thousand years, and tried to note how this environment has shaped the instincts which are man's means to an outlet for his biologically inescapable impulse.

"In Part III, I have considered the culmination of the strife in the present Western European environment. I have tried to think of man and woman forming a dual unit. I have tried to remember that woman, who was part of man once, is part of him still, and that the children of man may yet—

'Build a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.' "

MICHAEL FIELDING.

SOCIOLOGY

Glass, David V. *The Town*. London, 1935. John Lane. Pp. 141. Price 3s. 6d.

CONSIDERING how great a part the town has played in civilization, it is surprising that it has not received more attention. Webber's *Growth of Cities* is still the most notable